

ISSUE 145

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# ISLAMIC FOCUS

MY  
*hifa*  
JOURNEY



Lessons on  
*The* Friendship

**Suicide**  
THE ESSENTIAL TOOLKIT

# Ahlan Wasahlan...

## FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of the Islamic Focus comes with another bouquet of thought provoking and inspirational articles.

The personal account of Hafiz Dr Ebrahim Mayet, who completed his Hifz at age 64, is a truly motivational piece. It shows us that the link with the Noble Quran is a never ending one that continues for life. The more we show the desire to imbibe it, and make the effort towards it, the more it gives of itself to us.

Concepts from western secular liberalism are increasingly seen to be on a path of direct conflict with the ideology of Islam. In the article on free speech we explore the roots of the conflict and look beyond the rhetoric. Learn about the Islamic view on freedom of expression and free speech and judge the merits of western secular liberalism for yourself.

Suicide and its prime cause of depression is tragically on the

increase worldwide. Our article on the topic showcases Islam's stance on the topic, as well as provides tools to recognize and deal with people who are feeling suicidal. The more we make it part of the conversation, the more chance we have of saving lives.

The amazing journey towards knowing more about our Creator forms the theme of the article on the recognition of Allah Ta'ala. People often ignore the topic assuming it to be complex and difficult to comprehend. We remove those misconceptions and present the topic in an easy to understand format touching on the main precepts.

We hope you enjoy this presentation in our latest offering. Your thoughts are most welcome: [info@islamicfocus.co.za](mailto:info@islamicfocus.co.za)

*Muhammad Badsha*  
(Moulana)

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# Suicide

ALLAH TA'ALA HAS GIVEN US BOUNTIES WHICH ARE OURS TO USE. BUT THESE BOUNTIES COME WITH A PRICE AND CERTAIN CONDITIONS. WE ENJOY WEALTH AND IT BELONGS TO US BUT ON CONDITION THAT WE WILL HAVE TO ANSWER ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT REGARDING HOW WE EARNED THAT WEALTH AND IN WHICH AVENUES WE SPENT IT.

Life, which is the essence of our existence, is also ours but entrusted to us as a test. The authority to remove that life belongs to Allah ﷻ alone. A murderer for example can be executed, but only based on the guidelines set out by Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ. No matter how tough life gets, we are not given the authority to terminate our own lives.

## WISHING FOR DEATH

Suicide is at best only a temporary fix for whatever problem we wish to escape. Beyond this world is an eternity with which we have to contend. Leave alone taking our life, the Hadith instructs us not to even ask for death, "None of you should wish for death, nor should he pray for it before its appointed time arrives. For once anyone dies his opportunity to do good deeds comes to an end. In actual fact, the life of a believer is never extended except that it brings goodness." (Muslim)

The Prophet ﷺ was asked whose life was the best. He replied, "The one who has a long life and his deeds are good." (Tirmidhi)

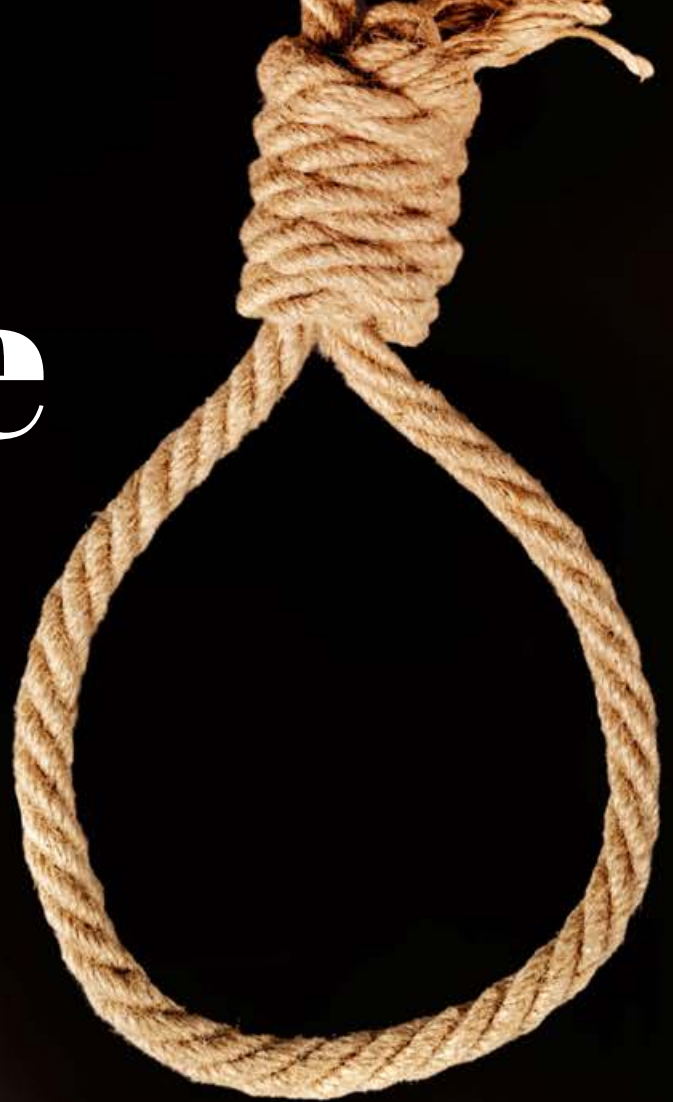
Someone commented to a pious person that death is a good thing.

He replied, "Do not say that for an hour in your life in which you ask Allah ﷻ for His forgiveness is better than the eternity of death."

To wish for death due to the hardships of this world is not allowed. The exception is where one fears harm to his religious commitments. Maryam ؑ said, when experiencing the birth of Prophet Eesa ؑ, "How I wish I had died before this." She said this fearing that she would not be able to handle the accusations of adultery that would follow. In the case of martyrdom for the sake of Allah ﷻ one can aspire for death in that sense as well.

The Hadith advises us, "None of you should ever wish for death due to any worldly harm that comes upon him. If he is really pressed and wants to pray, he should say, Oh Allah, allow me to live as long as life is better for me, and grant me death when death is better for me." (Bukhari)

We are also warned, "Do not wish for death for the terror that follows it is immense." (Ahmed)



## GRAVITY OF SUICIDE

The Hadith sounds stern warnings regarding suicide. "Whoever deliberately throws himself off a mountain and commits suicide, he will be in the fire of Hell forever hurling himself off the mountain (and carrying out this act of suicide)." (Bukhari) The Hadith informs us that the same applies to other means of committing suicide such as drinking poison or using a weapon.

There was a person who was fighting valiantly with the Muslims in a battle, but the Prophet ﷺ proclaimed him to be a person who will be in Hell. He was found later to have committed suicide due to the extensive wounds he had received. (Bukhari)

A person who was wounded could not bear the pain, panicked and committed suicide. Allah

ﷺ says in a Hadith related by the Prophet ﷺ, "My slave has caused death to himself hurriedly. As a result I forbid Paradise for him." (Bukhari)

### WHAT IS THE RULING REGARDING A MUSLIM WHO COMMITS SUICIDE?

Suicide is a major sin, but the person's faith is still intact. A suicide is given all the rites of burial like any other Muslim, Janaza salaah is prayed for him and he is buried in a Muslim cemetery according to Imam Abu Hanifah rahimahullah. In fact, Shamsul Aimmah Halwani rahimahullah states that if he repents at the time he carried out the act leading to his suicide, that repentance will also be accepted.

If any family suffers such a tragedy, they need to be given support and made to understand that what has happened cannot be undone. Unduly dwelling on what caused the tragedy and repeatedly questioning what could have been done differently only opens the door to the devil to cause more misery and heartache. Make dua for the person who has committed suicide as you would for any sinful Muslim and give charity on his behalf, etc.

### EXPRESSING EMOTIONS

The single biggest cause of suicide is depression. People who are dealing with suicidal thoughts or tendencies go through an immense internal struggle but it is a battle we

rarely see on the surface. People feel ashamed to speak about it. The reality is that speaking about it and seeking help saves countless lives. The more we leave it out of the conversation the more people will unfortunately pay the ultimate price. While a person might not be fully cured, many have learnt how to cope with it successfully.

Islam teaches us that we are allowed to express deep emotion within the parameters of Shariah, and that people should be understanding when they witness this outpouring.

Mughith rahimahullah was a slave who was married to Bareerah rahimahullah. When she was freed, she exercised her right to annul the marriage. Mughith rahimahullah had such intense love for her that he could not bear being parted from her. He asked the Prophet ﷺ to intervene on his behalf. The Prophet ﷺ recounted this outpouring of emotion by Mughith when he said to Abbas rahimahullah, "Are you not astonished at the love of Mughith for Bareerah, and the dislike of Bareerah for Mughith?" Ibn Abbas rahimahullah recalled how Mughith rahimahullah would follow Bareerah rahimahullah, weeping with tears flowing into his beard. He was not told to man up and pull himself together in the emotional turmoil that he was experiencing, nor that he should keep his emotions bottled up. In fact, the community tried to find a resolution for him with the Prophet ﷺ interceding on his behalf.

### WHAT CAN A PERSON WHO IS FEELING SUICIDAL DO?

1. Build optimism and try to change the paradigm. Do not view difficulties as always being a punishment or that it will be never ending.
2. You are a special creation of Allah ﷻ. You enjoy a direct link to Him. You came into existence due to His will. Allah ﷻ's focus is on you, hence your existence. Value your existence and love yourself. Don't depend on other people's love for you.
3. Turn to the support structures within your family unit or friends or Ulama to help in combatting negative thoughts.
4. Support groups provide useful assistance for those with potential thoughts of suicide or who have attempted suicide.
5. Seek medical assistance from professionals. Don't struggle with these feelings alone. Help is available especially with the greater awareness around the issue.
6. Identify positives that happen in your day and focus on them.



Close to 800,000 people die due to suicide annually worldwide. Indications are that for every suicide, there are another 20 attempted suicides.



Suicide is the 10th largest cause of death in the USA for all ages.



Suicide is the 2nd largest cause of death for ages 15-24 worldwide.



In the last 45 years, suicide has increased by 65%.



**“Don’t ruin your happiness with worry and your mind with pessimism. Don’t ruin your day by looking back at yesterday.”**



### **SOME OF THE WARNING SIGNS TO LOOK FOR:**

- 1.** Talking excessively about dying or wanting to die.
- 2.** Talking about emptiness or no way out of problems.
- 3.** Mentioning strong feelings of guilt or shame.
- 4.** Talking about having no reason to live.
- 5.** Giving away personal items and saying goodbye to family and friends.

### **WHAT TO DO TO HELP SOMEONE WHO IS SUICIDAL:**

- 1.** If someone has talked about committing suicide, don't leave them alone. Contact professionals and get emergency help.
- 2.** If it is not that immediate, talk to them about it. Mentioning suicide or discussing it is not going to push them over the edge. Talk privately without being judgmental. Be compassionate. Ask them directly if they are considering suicide.
- 3.** Suggest they get professional help and give them the options especially a religious scholar.
- 4.** Get the help of their loved ones if you are struggling to get through to them.

### **THE D WORD**

Depression worldwide affects

300 million people. Between 6-10% of the population will experience a depressive episode in a year. It is the 4th leading cause of disability worldwide. There is every indication that the devil can be latching on to this as a tactic to actively create despair.

The devil hatches plans to make people become despondent according to the Noble Quran.

Ibn al Qayyim رحمته الله says that there is nothing more beloved to the devil than sadness in a believer. He goes on to say, “Don't ruin your happiness with worry and your mind with pessimism. Don't ruin your day by looking back at yesterday.”

Al Sa'dy رحمته الله says, “Life is already short. Don't shorten it further with grief, worries and sadness.”

### **HERE ARE SIX WAYS TO PREVENT DEPRESSION:**

- 1.** Don't moan and complain about what Allah ﷻ has decided. The Prophet ﷺ would pray, “Oh Allah, bless me with inner contentment regarding whatever You have decreed.” Studies have shown that over 40% of girls at the age of six to eight were unhappy with their figures! It is no longer

a challenge of teens. Media exposure is the biggest culprit in this case.

- 2.** Don't live in the past. What's done is over. Move forward. Living in the past and constantly thinking about what could have been is a means for the devil to infiltrate our minds and leads us to depression.
- 3.** Don't ever sin without repenting. Speak to Allah ﷻ from your heart with regret and it will instantly erase the record of the sin.
- 4.** Don't hate people for what they have been given. The devil uses this as a means to ensnare people and mess up their lives. A villager who was 120 years old was asked about the secret to his long life. He replied, “I left out harboring jealousy for others, and my body remained healthy.”
- 5.** Don't turn yourself away from Allah ﷻ. The Noble Quran tells us that if we forget Allah ﷻ and His reckoning, then He will forget us on the Day of Judgment.





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# my Hifz journey

Article by Hafiz Dr Ebrahim Mayet who completed his Hifz at 64 years of age

**W**hat I write now is my personal journey to becoming a Hafiz of the Noble Quran. It began when I moved to Port Elizabeth in 1988, when I was 32 years old starting a job at Livingstone Hospital. At that time, I couldn't even recite the Quran properly, To give an idea, it would take me about an hour to recite Surah Yaseen. It was a struggle.

On my nights off from work, in that first Ramadan here, I would attend Esha salaah and Taraweeh, and hear the Imam conduct the entire 20 rakaats by himself. That was new to me, but what was more mesmerising was that he was not in a hurry, pulled on certain words and verses, repeated some, even cried through some of his recital, and I could hear every word clearly and yet it was completed in just over an hour!

I thought to myself, this is the Speech of Allah ﷻ. This Imam is so passionate, the words sound so important, but I understand almost nothing of what he is saying except for words or verses that we lay-Muslims are familiar with. I thought, how can Allah ﷻ be talking to me and I cannot understand a word?

So began my passion for the Noble Quran. Over the following years, and very slowly, I would, whenever I could, recite what I could and then look at the English meaning of each verse I recited. It was painstakingly slow, and by the time I closed the Noble Quran, I would have forgotten 80, no, 90% of the meanings. But while looking at the meanings it opened up the Noble Quran like never before. It came alive! It was like I was drawn into whatever I was reading/reciting, so I


continued.

In 1995, at 39 years old, we made Hajj. Sheikh Sudais and Sheikh Shuraim were the Imams of the Haram Sharief in Makkah Mukarramah and were all the rage. CD recordings of their Ramadan Taraweeh recitals were all over the markets there, so we bought these. But just hearing these two live gave me goosebumps from just being there standing behind them in those Salaah. That was real inspiration.

So when we got back home, I spent day after day, after Fajr, inspired by the beautiful recitations by both of them listening to their recital and following the English meanings with my finger. I would try and match the English words with their recital on CD.

For the next few Ramadans I would listen after Fajr to the 1 and quarter Juz for the next Taraweeh, hoping to enjoy the Taraweeh recital by matching it with the meanings, but for a very





long time I would still be lost for 90% of the Taraweeh. This never put me off.

I thought that the only way to get this right was to learn Quranic Arabic. So in 2012, at 56 years old, I found a self-learning Madinah University course with books and dvd's with a teacher teaching the basic Quranic Arabic from beginning to end. This course was made up of three text books, very systematically set out, teaching the grammar, construction, vocabulary, and a reading exercise after each lesson, with questions to answer from the reading exercise.

Here is what made this the best course: you had to write your answers! Of course, the teacher would go through the full exercise, but you had to write. That is what makes you understand!

I must say this was the most fun and educational language course I've done! Now reciting the text became easier and following the meanings have stuck consistently with the repetition.

In December 2015, I decided to do Hifz, with a local Aalim as my teacher. And so we began this journey in January 2016 at nearly sixty years old.

It took four years and nine months to complete, Alhamdulillah. My teacher would allow me any length of new sabak (work), would set dhor (revision) of the most recent Juz, and half or three-quarters of dhor (revision) of the older work. He would come to listen to me every three of four days. On average I would swot three-quarter page

to one page a day, so he would hear me recite between one-and-half to three pages of new sabak (work) every three to four days, plus the dhor (revision) as mentioned.

I never missed a day of swotting, whether a Sunday, or on holiday, except when sick. My swotting time was mainly in the mornings: I would get up daily at 3.30am and swot until Fajr, and an hour or so after Fajr. I would revise between Maghrib and Esha salaah.

### **THIS IS WHAT I FEEL IS VERY IMPORTANT:**

I could never memorise any verse without knowing its meaning. So I would recite a verse, look up its meaning in an English translation of the Noble Quran, and using my learnt Arabic would understand the meaning, and then swot it. And even with dhor (revision), I had to know the meanings to recite it.

Up until now, Alhamdulillah, whether I am reciting or standing behind an Imam in Salaah, I understand 90 – 95% of the recital. To me this is the ultimate, because you know what Allah Ta'ala is saying to you, you are drawn into the Salaah with full concentration, and you can apply what you understand of the Noble Quran as best as possible in your daily life.

Finally, my message to you is, that no matter your age, or occupation, I encourage everyone to memorise

the Noble Quran, no matter how little. Also study the meaning, even if without studying the language although understanding the language is like being given a key that opens the door to a treasure that is worth all that is in the heavens and earth put together – knowing what Allah Ta'ala is saying to you, and guiding you.

After all, Allah Ta'ala says in so many verses that this Noble Quran is a guide, a reminder, an instruction, good news for those who understand. To get the guidance, understand it!



# Lessons on Friendship

When the Prophet ﷺ went on the miraculous night journey from Makkah Mukarramah to Jerusalem, and from there to the heavens and back in a portion of the night, he recounted this journey to the Quraish. They displayed skepticism and incredulity. Hazrat Aeysha ؓ said that it was a test of people's faith and some failed by leaving Islam.

## 1. LOYALTY

The Quraish scented an opportunity to turn the Prophet ﷺ's closest friend and staunchest supporter Hazrat Abu Bakr ؓ away from him. They rushed to him with the story of the journey. Hazrat Abu Bakr ؓ reinforced his loyalty to the Prophet ﷺ and confirmed his faith in him by saying, "How can this be a problem for me to accept when I believe something even more farfetched to your minds. I believe that the Prophet ﷺ receives revelation from the heavens during the day and night." As a result of this display of loyalty and friendship, Hazrat Abu Bakr ؓ earned the title of Al Siddeeq, the truthful.

The default for us when we hear something untoward about our friends should be to think the best of them and dismiss the rumours.

Who counts as our friends?

Allah ﷻ explains, "The believing males and females are friends to each other." (Noble Quran 9:71) The definition of a friend covers all the people in our community. We should never engage in running anyone down. The Noble Quran (24:12) instructs us when we hear of any slander against our people, "Why, when you heard it, did not the believing men and believing women think good of one another and say, "This is an obvious lie."

## 2. GOOD FRIENDS

The second aspect of friendship is to link ourselves to friends who will assist us towards Paradise. Hazrat Abu Bakr ؓ earned another title through his friendship with the Prophet ﷺ : Saahib or companion. On the journey of Hijrah (emigration from Makkah Mukarramah to Madinah Munawwarah) Hazrat Abu Bakr ؓ accompanied the Prophet ﷺ, and earned this title from the Lord of the Universe Who mentioned it and saved it for posterity in the Noble Quran (9:40).

We need to surround ourselves with good friends who will lead us to Paradise. The Noble Quran (43:67) informs us that all friendship will turn to enmity on the Day of Judgment except those established for the sake of Allah ﷻ and based on piety.

"Close friends will be enemies to one another on that Day, except the pious."

The believers in Paradise will intercede for their friends who end up in Hell, saying, "Our brothers used to pray and fast and do good deeds with us," They will be given permission to intercede for their release from Hell.

Join yourself with friends who regularly attend Islamic programs and Salaah.

## 3. WISH WELL FOR FRIENDS

On being captured and facing execution, Khubaib radhiyallahu anhu was asked if he didn't wish for the Prophet ﷺ to be in his place while he was free. He replied, "I wouldn't wish for a thorn to prick the Prophet ﷺ and I am in comfort with my family."

Always share in the joy of others, be happy for their blessings, and pray for their continued success.

## 4. BE THE GOOD FRIEND

Just as we would like to have friends who will lead us to Paradise, we need to also aim to be such friends. We are taught to pray, "Make us leaders of the pious." (Noble Quran 25:74)



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# FREE SPEECH

THIS ARTICLE SEEKS TO EXPLORE THE ISLAMIC  
VIEWPOINT ON SPEECH, AND THE CONCEPT OF FREE  
SPEECH WITHIN WESTERN SECULAR LIBERALISM



A topic that comes up regularly in the news is the issue of derogatory and hurtful insults in the media in various forms against the Noble Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The French President Macron in 2020 defended the right to broadcast hurtful cartoons against the Prophet ﷺ as widely as possible.

This article seeks to explore the Islamic viewpoint on speech, the concept of free speech within current western secular liberalism, whether France has the moral ground to lecture others on human values, and how Muslims can respond to such hostile provocation.

Speech in Islam is acknowledged as being a powerful force for either good or evil.

A narration recorded by Ibn Hibban says, "The greatest natural potential for good or evil lies between a person's lips, i.e. his tongue."

The Hadith states that, "A slave speaks a word and it results in him plunging into the fire of Hell further than the distance between the east and the west." (Bukhari)

The limitations on how to use speech are clear in Islam. In explaining verse 2:83 in the Noble Quran which instructs us to, "speak kindly to people," Ataa rahimahullah says that this includes those of other faiths such as Jews and Christians. (Qurtubi)

Prophet Musa and Haroon rahimahumalaa were commanded to speak to the acknowledged tyrant Pharaoh with soft and gentle words (Noble Quran 20:44).

Islam acknowledges the power of speech in being a cornerstone of a harmonious society. The family is the core unit of society and children are instructed to never use the slightest hurtful words to their parents (Noble Quran 17:23).

There are rules governing the



use of words in Islam. Accusing a person falsely, or slandering someone are not taken lightly and the culprit will face legal ramifications. Backbiting and slander are reckoned among the major sins. So Islam is clear on the limitations of speech and that this produces an ordered society.

### What is the free speech or freedom of expression which the French President insisted on foisting on the Muslim community?

1. The media frames it as a clash between two camps, an enlightened one standing for freedom of expression and the other from the dark ages wanting to curtail it. Framing it in this way is ingenious; if you take an opposing stance you are deemed to be against an ideal, a human value. In reality the clash is between freedom to insult and what Muslims ask for – freedom from insult.
2. Free speech in its absolute and true form is never practiced. If this was the case, everyone should be free to insult the other, such as the employee and the child. In reality if this was truly practiced, society would have collapsed a long time ago. In essence no one practices it in reality, but this is demanded from Muslims.
3. It is a basic human civility to respect others. Insulting someone means you are rude and arrogant.
4. The concept of free speech is flawed in theory and politicized in practice. It is impossible to fully implement even in liberal democracies.
5. Free speech does not exist in absolute form. There are the laws

of sedition and defamation.

Try tweeting that a president should be assassinated and then argue the right to free speech. There are journalistic and professional standards that govern speech. Try naming your new upstart Google and then explain to the expert legal team that confronts you that you are practicing freedom of expression. Or call out bomb at an airport and explain to the SWAT team your right to free speech. Germany criminalized the denial of the Holocaust, while the UK has the Public Order Act. Write any grossly offensive communication or anything deemed offensive and you will face the brunt of the law. All of this in essence sets limitations on free speech.

The concept of free speech is politicized as well. It is regularly used selectively as a political tool. Liberal secularists use it as a notion of freedom, not actual freedom. In the year 850, Christians would go to the Great Mosque of Cordoba in Muslim Spain and loudly call out blasphemous statements. They wanted to be martyred and provoke a political reaction. Politicians use it today as tool to curry favour with voters or divert attention from their shortcomings.

The reality is somewhat different. The Turkish President Erdogan said



that the French President Macron needed to go for a mental checkup and the reaction to this use of free speech was the recall of the French ambassador to Turkey.

Critique of ideas and beliefs and engaging in serious academic or intellectual debate is not what Muslims are against. They are against insult. There exists plenty of Christian and Jewish literature which critiques Islam but this has not resulted in outrage. Non-Muslim citizens in a country governed by Islamic law can practice their religious beliefs in their homes or their places of worship. These religious beliefs are offensive to Muslim sensibilities such as the belief in Trinity as opposed to the belief in one God. The Noble Quran (6:108) alludes to this, but still instructs, **“Do not insult those they call upon besides Allah ﷻ.”**

The royal courts of Baghdad and Muslim Spain saw the scholars of other faiths debating matters of belief with the Muslim scholars.

# DOUBLE STANDARDS

That brings us to an even more important point, does France even have the moral high ground to lecture others on human values? Let us go back a few years.

**1.** Within the first three decades of the French invasion of Muslim Algeria, from 1830-1860, one million Algerians out of a total population of three million

lynchings.

If you think this got any better post-independence, think again. Ex French colonies had to deposit 50% of their gold reserves in France. As a result, France today has the world's 5th largest gold reserves. France claimed to want to set up a common currency for eight African countries which they had previously colonized,

**MALI IS THE 3RD LARGEST GOLD PRODUCER IN AFRICA. THEY MINE 60 TONS ANNUALLY WORTH AROUND \$6 BILLION, YET MALI ONLY GETS 10% OF THAT.**

were killed by the French due to war, massacres, disease and famine. This continued until 1962, and by then over 10 million Algerians were dead as a result of French rule.

**2.** In 1843, Lt Col Lucien de Montagnac said regarding the Muslims in Algeria, "Everyone must be seized, with no distinction of age or gender. Don't bring me a live Arab. Kill all males over 15, and ship the women and children to the islands."

**3.** On 8 May 1945, Germany surrendered. France was liberated, yet they now turned their guns on the Muslims of Algeria. Muslims had served in the French army fighting against Hitler, yet in the weeks following World War II, the French killed 30,000 Muslims. There was widespread vigilante killings, rape, air bombing and

in essence controlling them.

Mali is the 3rd largest gold producer in Africa. They mine 60 tons annually worth around \$6 billion, yet Mali only gets 10% of that.

That 10% also goes to a government largely educated in French institutes or trained in French military academies. With rampant corruption on the continent, it is no secret where all that money ends up. Mali has, since independence, with French military help and financial oversight, managed to become one of the world's most indebted nations. All thanks to the inhumane French financial colonialism.

The bottom line is that these continued crimes against humanity mean France has no moral ground to lecture anyone on human values at all.

## OUR RESPONSE?

**What is the Muslim response as a minority in a non-Muslim majority country to the derogatory insults against the noble Prophet ﷺ?**

**1** Muslims need to consult their Ulama for guidance which they have provided during similar such incidents in the past.

**2** Express anger within the legal framework of the country. This does have an impact. Arnoud Van Doorn is a Dutch politician who was part of an Islamophobic right wing party. He produced a film against the Prophet ﷺ. The subsequent protests made him ask: Why are so many people so passionate about the Prophet ﷺ? His research led him to Islam and repentance of his past.

**3** Don't give in to violence and destruction of property and lives.

**4** Boycott products where possible. This works best on the international level with Muslim countries taking the lead.

**5** Don't only concentrate on the current issue; highlight all Islamophobia.

**6** The greatest thing to do is follow the Sunnah and lifestyle of the Prophet ﷺ. We can expect enemies to spew hatred and this is largely out of our control. What is within our control is to bring more of the actions and appearance of the Prophet ﷺ within our lives. This will demonstrate our love and show the world that our undying allegiance is to the Prophet ﷺ.

The Sahaba ؓ practically demonstrated their love for the Prophet ﷺ by shielding him from the arrows and swords with their bodies on the battlefield. We can show in our appearance, greeting, eating, mannerisms and interaction that the Sunnah of our beloved is our first priority.





# RECOGNISING ALLAH ﷻ

When Hazrat Ali ؓ listed the six main blessings of Allah ﷻ upon us from among the innumerable bounties, he put Imaan or belief in Allah ﷻ at the top of that list. To believe in Allah ﷻ is in reality the starting point of a marvelous journey towards constantly knowing more about our beloved Allah ﷻ.

## KNOWLEDGE BRINGS APPRECIATION

The appreciation of anything increases with the amount of knowledge you have about it. A person who knows very little about vehicles is only too happy for that vehicle to get him to his destination. He has little interest in knowing about the engineering or design process that went into its production. Once a person gets to know the specifications of a vehicle such as a sports car for example,

he starts to gain better appreciation of what he is riding in. The enthusiast will wax lyrical about the engine, the quality of the build, the features, the dynamics and the handling.

The engineer has even more appreciation because he knows the technology that went into producing something that is cutting edge. The more you know about the car, the more you will enjoy it and enthuse about it.

The more we learn about Allah ﷻ, the more the joy and sweetness of recognizing Him will take hold of our hearts and minds.

## THE JOURNEY OF RECOGNITION

We cannot imagine or envisage Allah ﷻ, nor will we be able to see Him in this world. So how do we go about gaining more appreciation of Him? It is through knowing His qualities. The best starting point for that are His

Beautiful Names since each name points to a divine quality.

Allah ﷻ Himself instructs us, "To Allah belong the most beautiful names. So, call Him by them." (Noble Quran 7:180). The more we learn what these Names mean, the more we can apply them to the appropriate Duas. So when we are seeking forgiveness we call on Al Ghafoor, the most forgiving; or if we are looking for financial relief we call to Al Razzaq, the one who provides sustenance.

The Prophet ﷺ informs us, "Allah ﷻ has 99 beautiful names. Whoever learns them (and practices upon them) will enter Paradise." (Tirmidhi)

The more we learn these names the more they will open doors to recognising Allah ﷻ. The more we recognise Him, the more our love for Him will increase. This in turn will make us obedient to Him in carrying out His commands.

# “NO ONE INCREASES IN THE RECOGNITION OF ALLAH ﷻ EXCEPT THAT PEOPLE COME CLOSER TO HIM.”

## THE VALUE OF RECOGNITION

Allah ﷻ sets out the purpose of man's creation, “And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.” (Noble Quran 51:56) In explaining the worship of Allah ﷻ in this verse, Ibn Abbas ؓ says that worship refers to recognising Allah ﷻ.

Malik ibn Dinar ؓ laments the misfortune of those who die without recognising Allah ﷻ, “How unfortunate that the people who are attached to the material things of this world to the exclusion of all else, leave this world without experiencing the most enjoyable thing it has to offer.” On being asked what this was, he replied, “Recognising and knowing who Allah ﷻ is.”

Umm Darda ؓ stated, “The most virtuous and sublime knowledge is the recognition of Allah ﷻ.”

Ibn Jurajj ؓ explains the verse “And whoever believes in Allah, He guides his heart,” (Noble Quran 64:11) by stating that the person who attains the level of faith by which Allah ﷻ is recognised qualifies as the one whose heart is rightly guided.

Yahya ibn Dhurais ؓ quotes the wise people as saying, “How tragic it is that people have heard of Allah ﷻ but have not recognised Him and have not acknowledged Him as their Creator. In reality, that part of your life can truly be called life in which you have recognised your Creator and obeyed him. As for the rest, then do not even count it as life.”

Fadhil al Raqqashi ؓ describes true knowledge as being four things: 1. To recognise your Sustainer, who He is and what He does for you. 2. To know what He will do with you in the case you do something good or bad. 3. To know what He wants from you. 4. To know how to come out of your sins and repair the wrong of disobeying Him.

A person who does a tremendous amount of charitable works and establishes hospitals but does not believe in Allah ﷻ is guilty of treason, of the unpardonable crime of not acknowledging who has allowed him to be where he is in life.

Luqmaan the wise said, “The really evil person is the one who does not acknowledge his true Lord.”

Hakeem ibn Jafar ؓ said that he heard Abu Abdullah al Barnathi ؓ say many times, “Through recognising your Creator, acts of worship become very easy to carry out for those who wish to practice.” This is an excellent remedy for lethargy and not having the drive or enthusiasm to do good deeds.

Hassan ibn Atiyyah ؓ notes a recipe for gaining popularity, “No one increases in the recognition of Allah ﷻ except that people come closer to him.”

Imam Ghazali ؓ captures the essence of recognising Allah ﷻ in his inimitable style, “In summary, the most exalted knowledge and its pinnacle is the recognition of Allah ﷻ. This is an ocean whose bottom can never be reached.” He recounts a dream of two pious people. One had a paper in his hand which read, “If you have done everything well (and have reached the peak of your profession or skill) then never think that you have done anything well until you recognise Allah ﷻ, and know that He is the Originator of causes and the Creator of all things.” In essence, not recognising that Allah ﷻ has given you all that you have means that you have nothing.

## AN INFINITE OCEAN

Our minds are extremely limited in capacity. We can only gain a tiny amount of the recognition of Allah ﷻ. The reality is that there is no end to the journey of recognising Him. The Prophet ﷺ would pray, “Oh my Lord, increase me in knowledge.”

Allah ﷻ puts into perspective our limited capacities when He says, “And if whatever trees upon the earth were pens and the sea [was ink], replenished thereafter by seven more seas, the words of



Allah would not be exhausted.” (Noble Quran 31:27)

Allamah Shabbir Uthmani رحمته الله writes, “If all the trees were chopped and made into pens, and the seas into ink, and seven more seas with it, and the entire creation starts to write from the beginning of their existence to the end, you will not be able to write all the things that display the virtue, grandeur, might and majesty of Allah ﷻ. The writers will die, the pens will break and the ink will run out and the praises of Allah ﷻ will not come to an end. How can limited and finite resources be used to accomplish something that is unlimited and infinite?”

It is for this reason that the Prophet ﷺ proclaimed, “I cannot enumerate and encompass your praises (Oh Allah)! You are as You have praised Yourself.” (Muslim)

### **SOME EASY WAYS TO ATTAIN THE RECOGNITION OF ALLAH ﷻ:**

1. Learn the meaning of the Names of Allah Ta'ala ﷻ. This will allow you to increase your knowledge of Him.
2. Think of Allah ﷻ before you do anything or use something. When the plate of Biryani is placed in front of you, with its lovely mutton from sheep that grazed on far off farms, and the Basmati rice from India or Pakistan, the spices from Tanzania, the saffron from Spain, and all the

ingredients from so many places around the world, then think: Wow! All this preparation for a plate of food for an insignificant dot on the map like me! Who has made all this possible?

The Quraish found it farfetched to believe in resurrection because they argued that the body disintegrates after death and the earth and creatures consume it. How can this be put together again and come to life? (Noble Quran 50:2-3) Allah ﷻ answers them, “We know very well how much of them is consumed by the earth, and We have a Book that Preserves everything.” (Noble Quran 50:4) Leave alone when we die, even while we are alive our bodies are constantly being composed of innumerable particles in the form of food, drink and medicine from all corners of the world. So why would it be difficult for Allah ﷻ to collect and gather all these parts once it has disintegrated?

So before we eat the food, we remember Allah ﷻ. After enjoying a delicious meal, we thank Allah ﷻ. Once we gain strength from that food we use our

minds and bodies in doing things that are pleasing to Allah ﷻ.

3. Look at the creation and marvel at the Creator. When you see a flower, ask who fashioned the petals? Which artist drew the beautiful designs on the butterflies? Who gave the tropical fish their amazing colours? A human artist copies the sunset for example, makes a canvas and sells it for a lot of money so that we can look at it and marvel. His copy is actually devoid of life. Allah ﷻ's sunset on the other hand is alive and every moment is different. It is free for even the poorest to enjoy. The sunset goes through a stunning array of colours and movements. All created for us so that we many recognise Allah ﷻ.

While we live in the material world, we need to become aware of the wonders of our Creator and His Beauty so that our existence gains meaning. We will enjoy the material happiness that the world offers but with recognising Allah ﷻ we gain spiritual ecstasy as well.

# HADITH

## VERIFICATION SERIES 07

In this series we bring you a selection of topics from [hadithanswers.com](http://hadithanswers.com)



### FASTING IS A SHIELD AGAINST JAHANNAM

**Question:** Is this Hadith authentic: Narrated Mutarrif who was from the tribe of Banu Amir ibn Sa'sa'ah that Sayyiduna Uthman ibn Abul

'As Ath Thaqafi ؓ invited him to drink some milk. Mutarrif said: "I am fasting." Uthman ؓ said:

"I heard Nabi ﷺ say: 'Fasting is a shield against the Fire just like your shield used when fighting.'"

**Answer:** Imams Nasai and Ahmad ؓ have recorded this Hadith. Imam Ibn Khuzaymah ؓ has declared the Hadith authentic. (Sunan Nasai; Al Mujtaba, Hadith: 2231,

Musnad Ahmad, vol. 4 pg. 217, Sahih Ibn Khuzaymah, Hadith: 2125)

The words 'Fasting is a shield' also appear in Sahih Bukhari,

Sahih Muslim and other Hadith collections. (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith: 1894, 7492 and Sahih Muslim, Hadith: 1151)

### FASTING AND GOOD DEEDS IN RAMADAN

**Question:** Please comment on the status of this narration: Any healthy Muslim who finds himself in Ramadan, fasts during the day, performs his portion of night Salah, lowers his gaze,

protects his private parts, tongue and hand, is punctual on his Salah in congregation, goes early for Jumu'ah then he has fasted the month [in the true sense], he will receive full reward, will attain

Laylatul Qadr and has succeeded with the reward of his Rabb. Abu Ja'far, a narrator adds 'A reward unlike the reward of the leaders of the world.'

**Answer:** Imam Abu Bakr ibn Abid Dunya ؓ has recorded this narration [mursalan] with a very weak chain. (Fadailu Shahri Ramadan, Hadith: 21. Refer: Mizanul I'tidal, vol. 1 pg. 351, number: 1360)

### REWARD OF OPENING THE FAST WITH A HALAL DATE

**Question:** Is this narration authentic: Whoever opens his fast with a halal date, his Salah will yield the reward of four hundred Salah.

**Answer:** Imam Ibn 'Adiy ؓ has recorded this narration with variation in the wording. However, the Muhaddithun have declared the Hadith a fabrication. The Hadith is not suitable to quote. (Al Kamil, vol. 9 pg. 556, Tanzihush Shari'ah, vol. 2 pg. 147)

### AUTHENTICITY OF THE HADITH ON THE SIX FASTS OF SHAWWAL

**Question:** Is it true the Hadith regarding six days of Shawwal fasting has a weak narrator and some of the 'Ulama said fasting six days of Shawwal is makruh?

**Answer:** What you have heard is incorrect.

'Allamah Qasim ibn Qutlubgha ؓ has rebutted those who claimed this fast to be makruh in his booklet entitled: 'Tahrirul Aqwal fi Sawmis Sitti min Shawwal'.

The Hadith that encourages the 6 fasts of Shawwal is highly authentic and has been considered as mutawatir (which is the highest level of authenticity) by Muhaddithun

like: 'Allamah Suyuti and 'Allamah Sayyid Muhammad ibn Ja'far Al-Kattani ؓ. (Qatful Azhar, Hadith: 50 and Nazmul Mutanathir, Hadith: 128)

There are more than fifteen Sahabah ؓ who have reported this from Rasulullah ﷺ. Among them are Sayyiduna Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari ؓ in Sahih Muslim, Sayyiduna Thawban ؓ in Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith: 1715, Musnad Ahmad, vol.5 pg.280, and Sayyiduna Shaddad ibn Aws ؓ in kitabul 'ilal of ibn Abi Hatim, Hadith:

745. Ibn Abi Hatim then quotes his esteemed father, Abu Hatim ؓ to have declared this narration as authentic.

Hafiz 'Ala-iy ؓ writes: 'The Hadith of Abu Ayyub – in Sahih Muslim- is the most authentic (asahh) on this topic.' He also writes: 'The Hadiths of Abu Ayyub, Thawban and Shaddad ibn Aws are authentic (sahih).' (Raf'ul Ishkal 'an Siyam sittati Ayyamin min Shawwal, pg.303 and 329 – Majmu' Rasail)





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